

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00
SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07 L-03
PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-14 SSM-05 TRSE-00
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-----103537 220053Z /62

O 220015Z JAN 78 ZFF-4
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO USDEL SECRETARY IN ATHENS IMMEDIATE
SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0073
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, IS, US
SUBJECT: ATHERTON AND BEGIN'S REMARKS TO THE PRESS AFTER
THEIR MEETING, JERUSALEM, JANUARY 21, 1978

1. BEGIN: GOOD EVENING, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

2. ATHERTON: LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. I AM VERY GRATEFUL
INDEED TO THE PRIME MINISTER FOR GIVING ME SO MUCH OF HIS
TIME THIS EVENING, AND SO LATE IN THE EVENING. I HAVE
COME ON THE INSTRUCTIONS OF SECRETARY VANCE TO REPORT TO
THE PRIME MINISTER ON THE SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT
SADAT YESTERDAY IN CAIRO. AS THE SECRETARY SAID AFTER
THAT MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SADAT, HE FEELS THAT THE DOOR
TO PEACE HAS NOT BEEN CLOSED, THAT EFFORTS MUST GO FORWARD
TO FIND WAYS TO CONTINUE THE PEACE PROCESS. WE HAVE DISCUSSED
THESE POSSIBILITIES THIS EVENING, AND I THINK WE'LL CONTINUE
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TO PURSUE THIS OBJECTIVE. THANK YOU.

3. BEGIN: I AM VERY GRATEFUL TO OUR DEAR FRIEND, MR. ATHERTON
FOR THE INFORMATION HE GAVE TO OUR FOREIGN MINISTER AND MYSELF
TONIGHT IN THE WAKE OF THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN PRESIDENT SADAT
AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE, MR. VANCE, IN CAIRO. WE HEARD VERY
IMPORTANT DETAILS ABOUT THAT CONVERSATION. NOW I HAVE TO TELL

YOU IMMEDIATELY THAT WE DID NOT YET HEAR THE SPEECH BY PRESIDENT SADAT. WE DIDN'T HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO LISTEN TO THE SPEECH, AND IT IS IMPORTANT FOR US TO STUDY IT. I THINK WE SHALL HEAR THE SPEECH ON OUR RADIO IN THE NEXT HOUR OR TWO PERHAPS ALSO GET A TRANSCRIPT IN HEBREW, AND OF COURSE TOMORROW IT WILL BE LAID BEFORE THE CABINET. TOMORROW WE SHALL TAKE A DECISION ABOUT THE CONCRETE QUESTION OF SENDING OUR DELEGATION TO THE MILITARY COMMITTEE. THAT IS, AS I TOLD YOU A FEW DAYS AGO, UP TO THE DECISION OF THE CABINET, AND I HOPE THAT TOMORROW THIS DECISION WILL BE TAKEN. NOW I HAVE TO SAY A FEW WORDS IN HEBREW, WITH YOUR PERMISSION.

4. (UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION--SAME AS ABOVE WITH FOLLOWING EXCEPTIONS) BEGIN: I AM VERY GRATEFUL TO UR DEAR FRIEND, MR. ATHERTON, FOR THE INFORMATION HE GAVE TO OUR FOREIGN MINISTER AND MYSELF IN THE PRESENCE OF AMBASSADOR SAMUEL LEWIS, AND THE LEGALADVISOR AND MR. RUBENSTEIN. (REMAINING TEXT SAME AS ENGLISH).

5. Q: MR. BEGIN. DO YOU AGREE WITH MR. ATHERTON BASED ON WHAT YOU HEAD FROM HIM THAT THE DOOR TO THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS IS STILL OPEN. THAT IT IS STILL POSSIBLE TO CONTINUE?

6. BEGIN: THIS IS PROBABLY THE STATEMENT MADE BY PRESIDENT SADAT, AND AS I TOLD YOU WE SHALL LISTEN TO HIS
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SPEECH. THE INFORMATION GIVEN TO US BY MR. ATHERTON IS OF COURSE OF GREAT IMPORTANCE.

7. (HEBREW--UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION) Q: MR. PRIME MINISTER, IF AFTER THE REPORT OF MR. ATHERTON HAVE IN YOUR OPINION BETTER CONDITIONS BE CREATED TO CONTINUE THE DISCUSSIONS IN THE COMMITTEES?

8. BEGIN: ABOUT ALL OF THIS WE'LL DECIDE TOMORROWM IN THE GOVERNMENT SESSION, AS I SAID BEFORE. FIRST OF ALL WE MUST READ PRESIDENT SADAT'S SPEECH, OR AT LEAST LISTEN TO IT. WE HAVE NOT AS YET DONE EITHER ONE OF THESE.

9. Q: FROM THE REPORTS ON THE TALKS THAT MR. VANCE HAD IN EGYPT, HAVE WE LEARNED ANYTHING NEW ON THE EGYPTIAN POSITION?

10. BEGIN: WE LEARNED THINGS.

11. Q: GOOD THINGS?

12. BEGIN: IMPORTANT THINGS. (END HEBREW)

13. Q: WILL THE CABINET DECIDE TOMORROW BOTH ABOUT THE
FUTURE OF THE MILITARY AND THE POLITICAL COMMITTEES?

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14. BEGIN: THESE QUESTIONS WILL BE DEBATED BY THE CABINET
TOMORROW.

15. Q: ARE YOU ANTICIPATING ANY AMERICAN PRESSURE?

16. BEGIN: NOT AT ALL. WHY CAN THERE BE ANY PRESSURE?
AS I TOLD YOU TIME AND AGAIN, OUR PEACE PLAN WAS BROUGHT
BY ME TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, THE VICE
PRESIDENT, THE SECRETARY OF STATE, MR. ATHERTON WAS ALSO
PRESENT, AND SENATORS, RANKING SENATORS, AND FORMER PRESIDENT
OF THE UNITED STATES, MR. FORD, AND ALL OF THEM SAID
IN PUBLIC THAT IS A GOOD PLAN, A FAIR BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS.
NOW, WHY SHOULD FAIRNESS BE TURNED INTO UNFAIRNESS, OR A
CONSTRUCTIVE APPROACH INTO SOMETHING OPPOSITE, WHY PRESSURE.
IT'S A GOOD PEACE PLAN AND WE SUGGESTED IT TO PEOPLE IN THE
UNITED STATES - THE MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE. ALSO WE BROUGHT
IT TO PRESIDENT SADAT. EVERYTHING WAS INCLUDED. AND THERE
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SHOULD BE A PROPER CLAM NEGOTIATION ABOUT IT. THAT WAS THE WAY WE DECIDED TOGETHER WITH PRESIDENT SADAT IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE FORMATION OF THE TWO COMMITTEES. PRESIDENT SADAT SUDDENLY, TO THE SURPRISE OF ALL OF US, ORDERED THE EGYPTIAN DELEGATION TO THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE TO BE WITHDRAWN. SO FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW THERE SHOULD BE A NEGOTIATION TO CONCLUDE PEACE TREATIES. WE DIDN'T CHANGE OUR MINDS AT ALL.

17. (HEBREW - UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION) Q: WHAT ARE THE CHANCES NOW FOR A SUMMIT MEETING BETWEEN YOU AND PRESIDENT SADAT WITH PRESIDENT CARTER?

18. BEGIN: I DON'T KNOW ABOUT ANY CHANCE FOR THIS. I WAS TOLD SOME TIME AGO THAT I WOULD PROBABLY BE INVITED TOGETHER WITH PRESIDENT SADAT TO WASHINGTON. ON THIS I ANSWERED THAT IF I RECEIVE AN INVITATION I WILL COME. THIS IS OUR POSITION THIS EVENING AS WELL. BUT AS I SAID, WE HAVEN'T HEARD ANYTHING ABOUT SUCH AN INITIATIVE. (END HEBREW)

19. Q: MR. ATHERTON, WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE FOLLOWING DAYS?

20. ATHERTON: MY INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE SECRETARY ARE TO REMAIN IN THE AREA TO BE AVAILABLE, TO BE OF HELP IN ANY WAY THAT I CAN ON BEHALF OF THE SECRETARY, AND ON BEHALF OF PRESIDENT CARTER, WITH REGARD TO KEEPING THE PEACE PROCESS GOING.

21. Q: WILL YOU BE GOING BACK TO CAIRO, SIR?

22. ATHERTON: I DON'T KNOW AT THIS POINT.

23. Q: WILL THE SECRETARY BE COMING HERE IN THE NEAR FUTURE AGAIN?

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24. ATHERTON: THERE ARE NO PRESENT PLANS FOR THE SECRETARY TO COME BACK.

25. BEGIN: I WOULD LIKE TO SAY THAT IF MR. ATHERTON DECIDES TO GO TO CAIRO, WE WILL NOT OBJECT IN THE SERVICE OF PEACE, BUT HE'S A WELCOME GUEST TO JERUSALEM, AND HE SHOULD STAY IN JERUSALEM.

26. ATHERTON: THANK YOU, MR. PRIME MINISTER.

27. BEGIN: THANK YOU VERY MUCH. GOOD NIGHT. ALL THE
BEST TO YOU.
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